



Image

269

DIGITAL  
EDITION

T. MCFARLANE  
S. KUDRANSKI

# SPAWN





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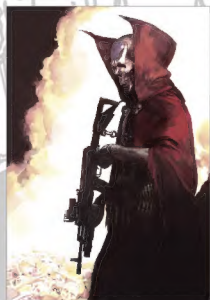
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SPAWN CREATED BY  
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#### PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN

Spawn goes on a killing spree looking for the people who are responsible for Cyan's drug addiction. But he realizes he cannot fight alone and enlists the help of his 'friend' Earl. Al tells Earl the job he wants him to do pays well and because Earl needs money to take care of his ill mother, he takes it. After Earl takes his van to pick up a mysterious package for Al, he meets him at a large warehouse where one of the big drug lords resides. Spawn tells Earl to run as fast as he can away from the van and Spawn detonates explosives which not only blow up the van, but most of the contents of the warehouse as well. Meanwhile, Terry goes to visit Cyan who's still in a treatment center. She tells Terry to tell Al that she has the answer to the question he had asked her. Later, Terry gets a call from his boss who tells him the 'body count' of drug dealers is skyrocketing and is approached by a man in black suit who takes him into police custody.





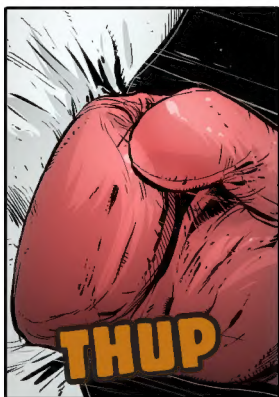


IT'S LATE.  
THE GYM IS  
CLOSED FOR  
THE NIGHT.



UNLESS YOU'RE  
BUDDIES WITH  
OWNER.

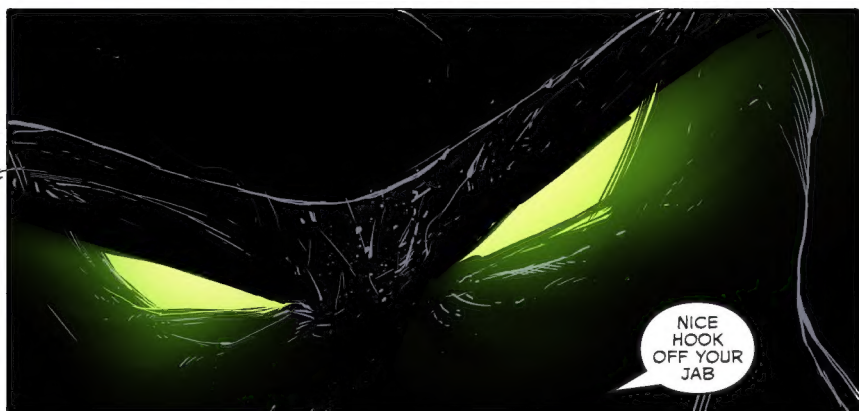
LIKE EARL.



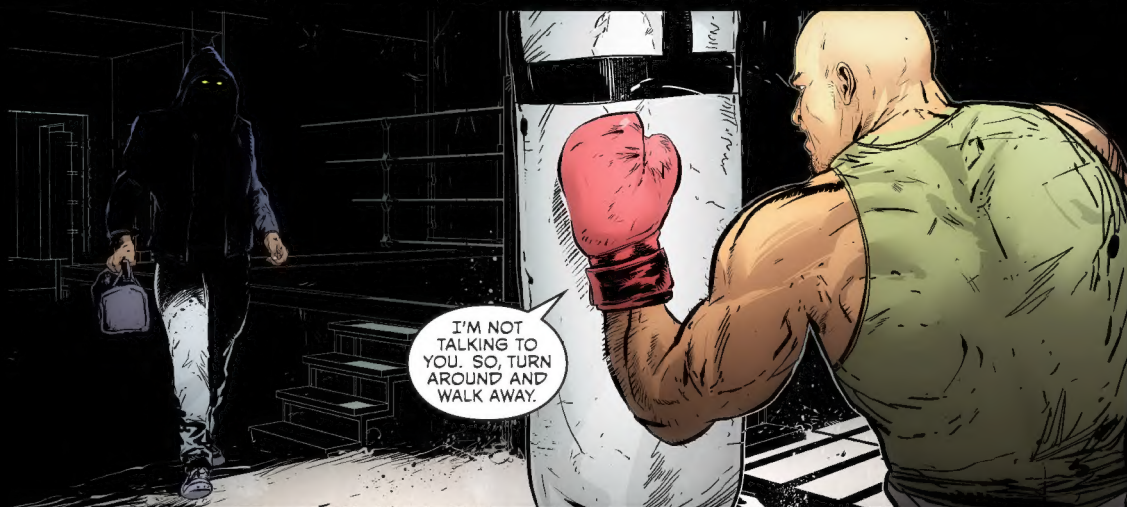
THUP



THUP



NICE  
HOOK  
OFF YOUR  
JAB



I'M NOT  
TALKING TO  
YOU. SO, TURN  
AROUND AND  
WALK AWAY.





JUST  
WANTED TO  
TELL YOU  
SOMETHING.

DON'T NEED  
TO HEAR IT. I TOLD  
YOU... I'M OUT. I'M  
NOT DOING ANY  
MORE OF YOUR  
BULLSHIT.\*

\*See last issue—Todd



I  
KNOW.

AND  
BECAUSE OF  
YOU I'VE GOT  
NO RIDE. YOU'RE  
PAYING FOR  
MY VAN.

I KNOW  
THAT,  
TOO.



GOOD.



I NEED  
YOU TO  
KNOW THAT  
YOU HELPED  
PEOPLE  
LAST  
NIGHT.

MOST OF  
THEM YOUNG  
KIDS. THE  
KIND NOBODY  
GIVES A CRAP  
ABOUT.

IS  
THAT  
SO?

IT IS.

I ALSO  
UNDERSTAND  
YOU DON'T  
WANT TO BE  
BOtherED.



SO, HERE'S  
SOMETHING TO  
TAKE CARE OF  
YOUR RIDE. YOU  
SHOULD BE ABLE  
TO GET AN  
UPGRADE.





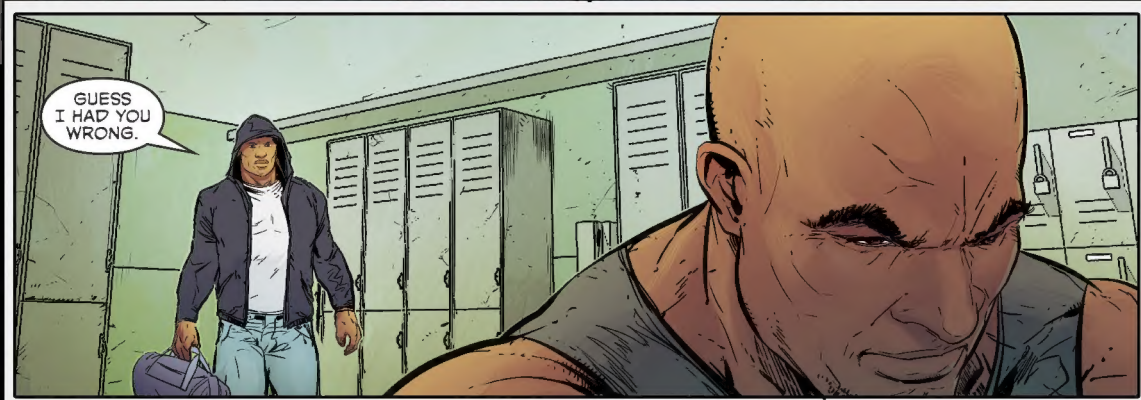




I'M KEEPING A PROMISE, AND FOLLOWING A PLAN. TRYING TO HELP A GIRL OUT AND A MILLION OTHERS LIKE HER THAT GET TAKEN ADVANTAGE OF EVERY DAY AROUND THIS PLANET.

THERE'S EVIL SHIT OUT THERE. TONS OF IT! AND I CAN DO SOMETHING TO STOP IT. BUT NOT SOLO.

SO, WHAT AM I DOING? I'M TRYING TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE. THOUGHT YOU'D BE INTERESTED IN THAT TOO.

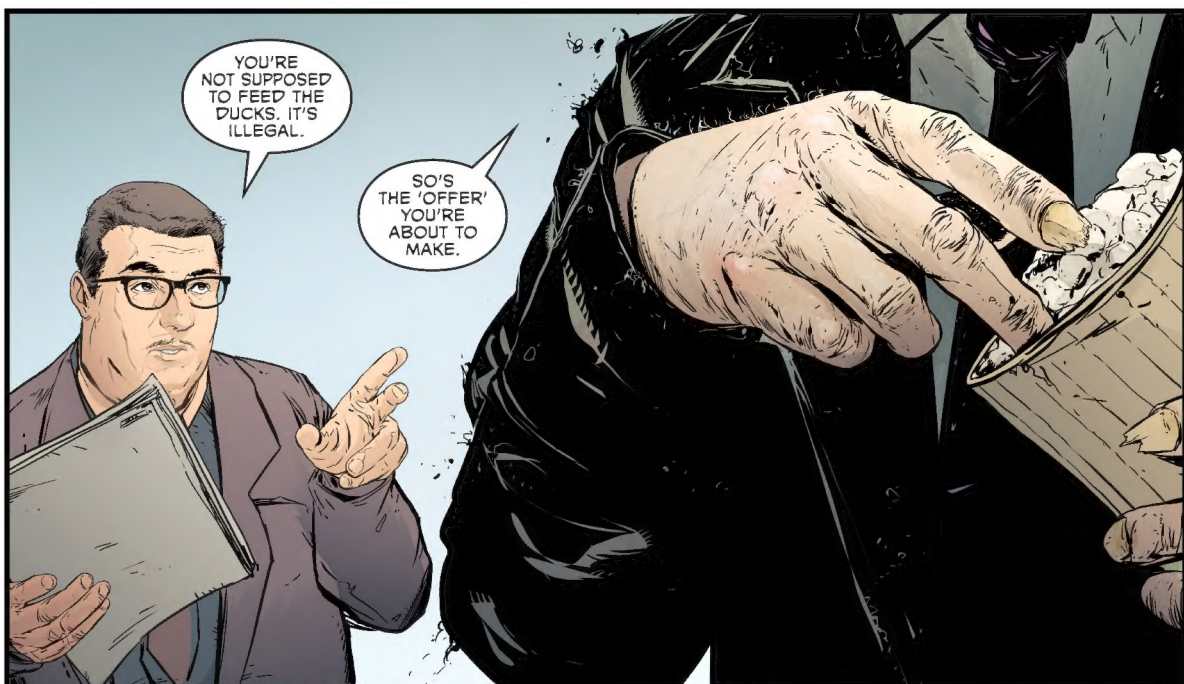


GUESS I HAD YOU WRONG.



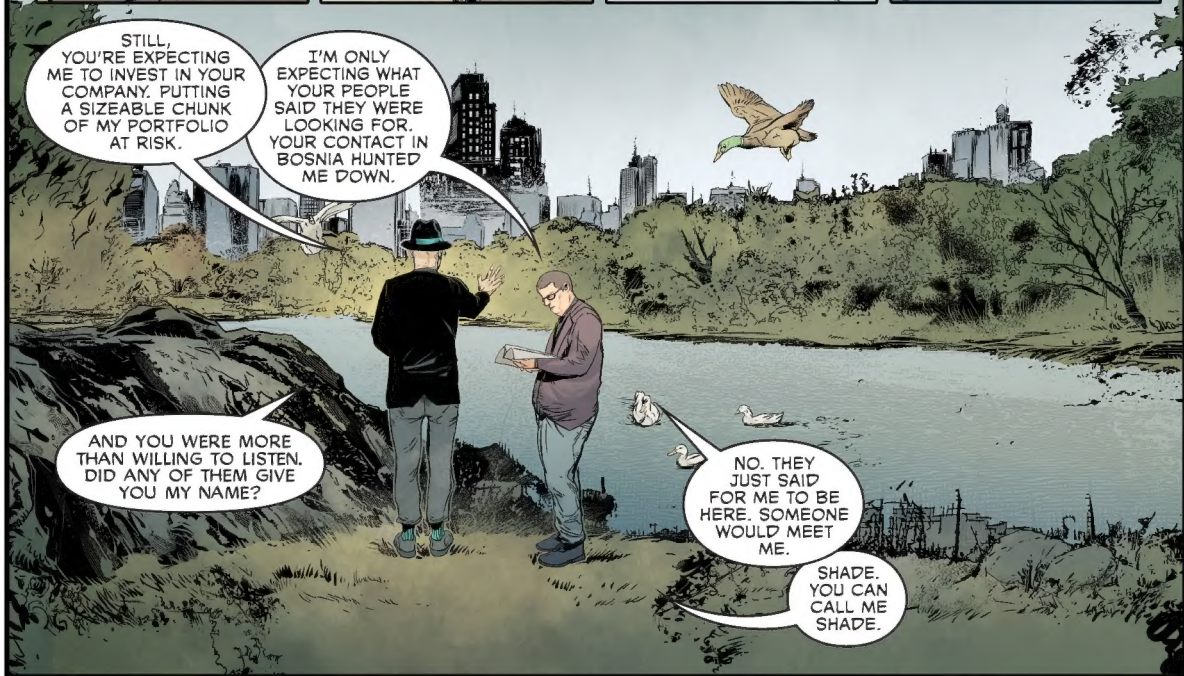
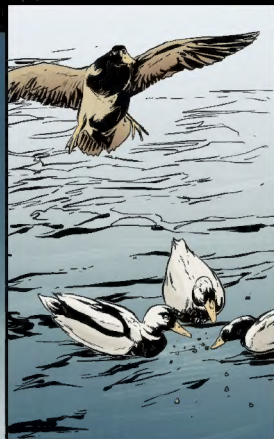
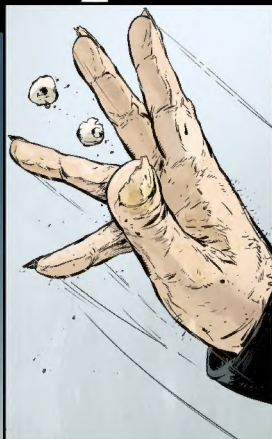






YOU'RE NOT SUPPOSED TO FEED THE DUCKS. IT'S ILLEGAL.

SO'S THE 'OFFER' YOU'RE ABOUT TO MAKE.



STILL, YOU'RE EXPECTING ME TO INVEST IN YOUR COMPANY. PUTTING A SIZEABLE CHUNK OF MY PORTFOLIO AT RISK.

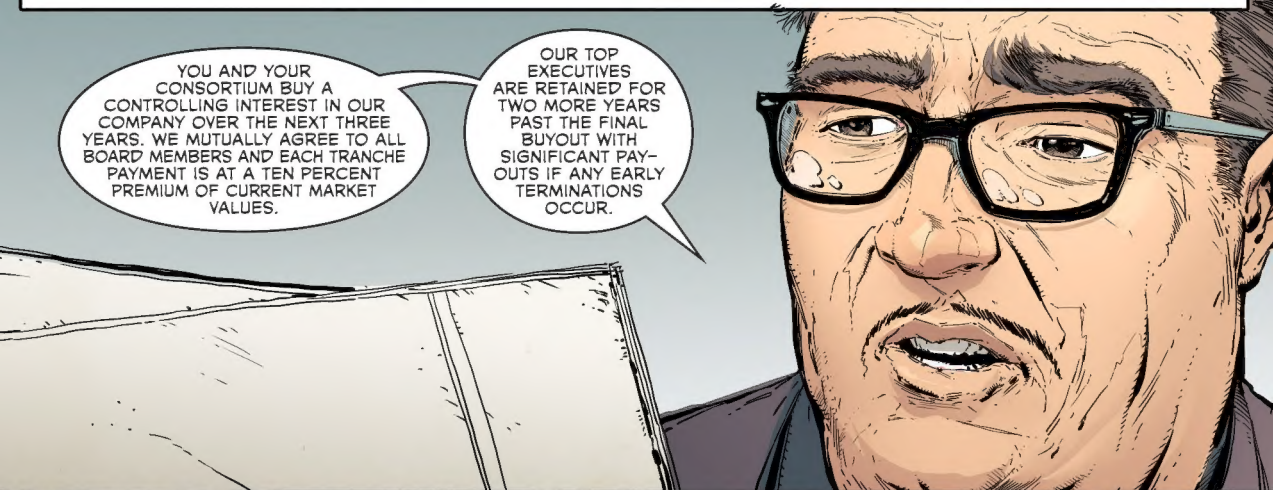
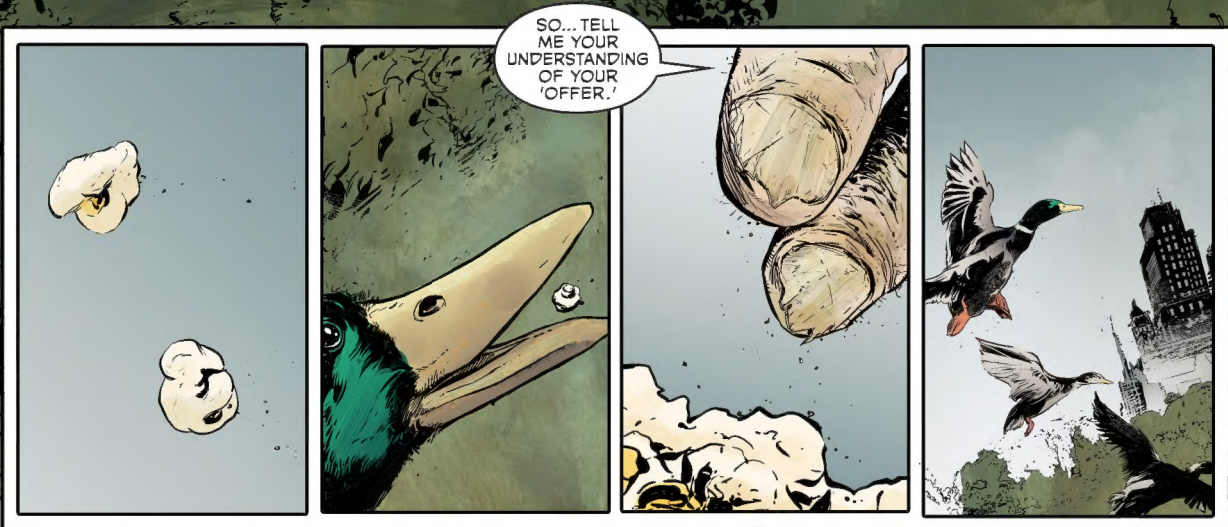
I'M ONLY EXPECTING WHAT YOUR PEOPLE SAID THEY WERE LOOKING FOR. YOUR CONTACT IN BOSNIA HUNTED ME DOWN.

AND YOU WERE MORE THAN WILLING TO LISTEN. DID ANY OF THEM GIVE YOU MY NAME?

NO. THEY JUST SAID FOR ME TO BE HERE. SOMEONE WOULD MEET ME.

SHADE. YOU CAN CALL ME SHADE.

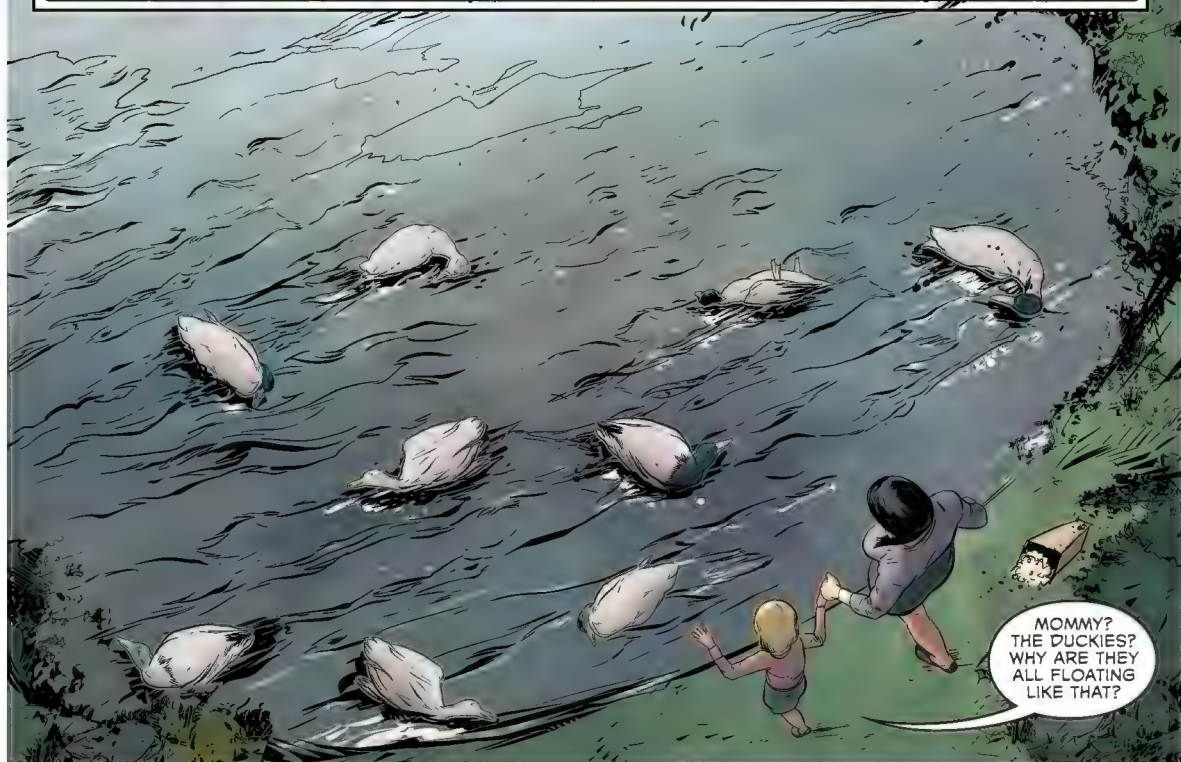
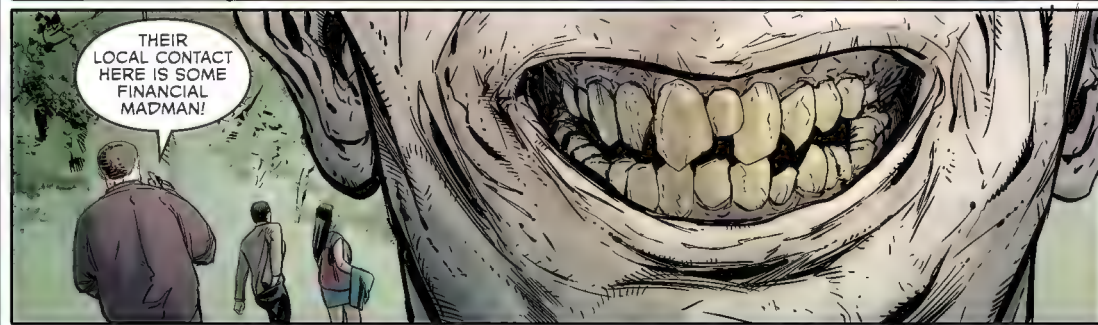
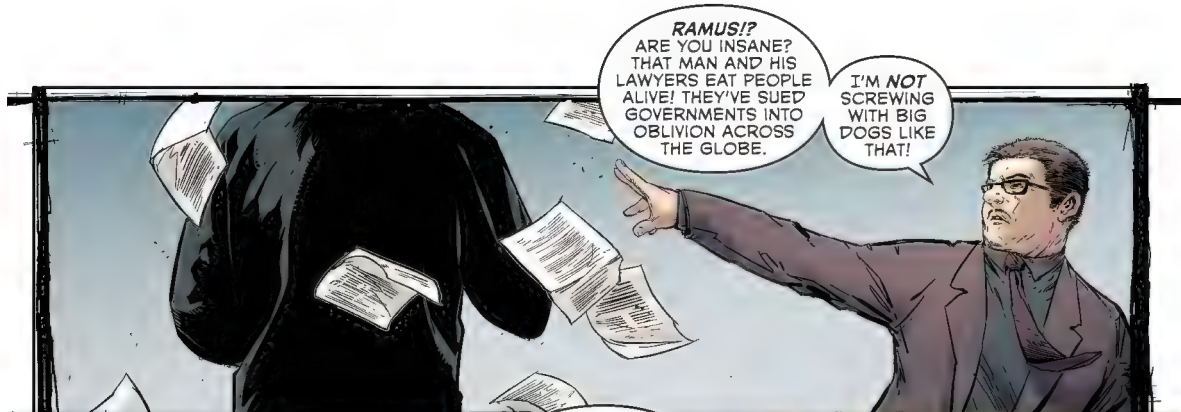














FOR A DAY AND A HALF, EARL HAS  
SPENT TIME TAILING AL SIMMONS.

KEEPING HIS DISTANCE, WHILE USING  
EVERY TRICK HE LEARNED FROM  
THE MILITARY AND THE STREETS.



AND WHEN AL DISAPPEARED  
ONTO A ROOFTOP HE KNEW  
SOMETHING WAS GEARING UP.

WHAT THE  
F--! DON'T  
BUG OUT  
NOW.



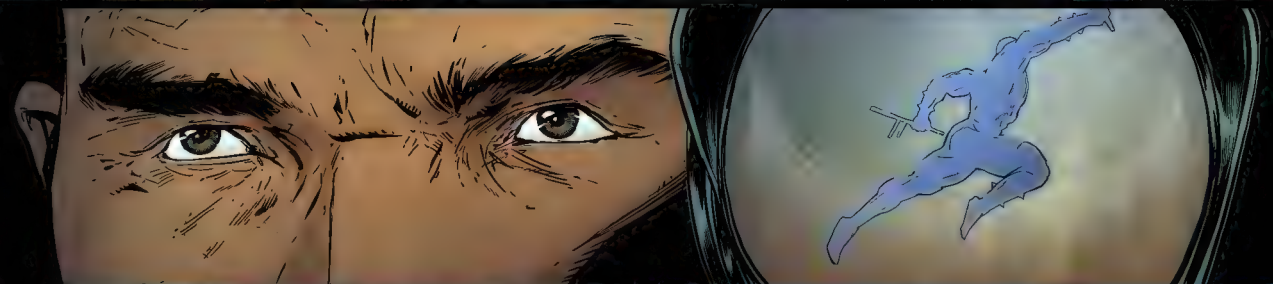
WHEN THE SCOPE REFOCUSSES,  
EARL IS GREETED BY A BLACK-  
CLAD SPECTER THAT APPEARS TO  
BE STARING BACK AT HIM.



AL?  
WHO ARE  
YOU?



THE GAME IS  
ABOUT TO BEGIN.



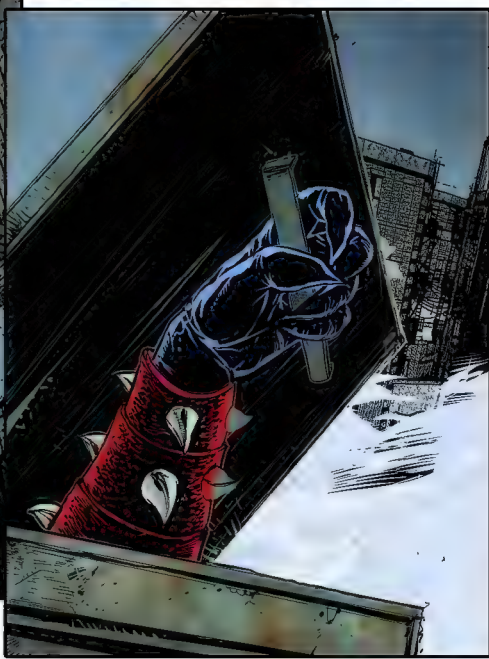
EARL, IN PURSUIT,  
IDLY WONDERES  
HOW HE COULD  
HAVE MISSED THAT  
AL MAY SOMEHOW  
BE DIFFERENT.



SECONDS LATER AL  
DISAPPEARS AGAIN ON TOP  
OF A BUILDING RUN BY SOME  
MID-LEVEL DRUG GANG.



AFTER THE DOCK  
INCIDENT, EARL CAN ONLY  
GUESS WHAT'S ABOUT  
TO HAPPEN.

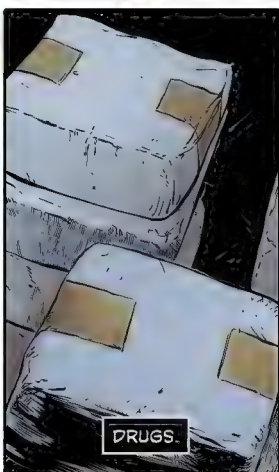




DIRTY MONEY.



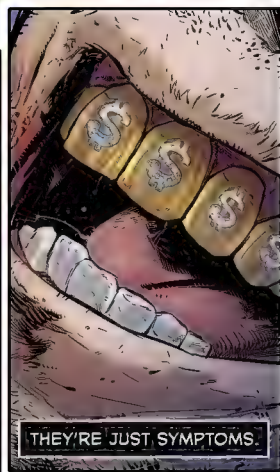
DRUGS.



GUNS.



THEY'RE JUST SYMPTOMS.



THE REAL ILLNESS IS THE  
PLEASURE SOME MEN TAKE  
LORDING OVER VICTIMS OF  
THESE CORRUPT VICES.



AL'S HAD IT WITH  
ALL OF THEM.



WITH THE DOORS TO  
HEAVEN AND HELL  
FINALLY LOCKED HIS  
'PLAN' IS NOW IN FULL  
FORCE.

AND THERE'LL BE  
NO MERCY FROM  
ITS PATH.







**CRACK**

THOSE PROTECTING THEIR INTERESTS BELIEVE FEAR AND POWER IS THE BEST WAY TO MEET THIS BLACK CLAD INTRUDER. "LET'S SEE HIM STARE DOWN A SHOTGUN BARREL" THEY THINK.

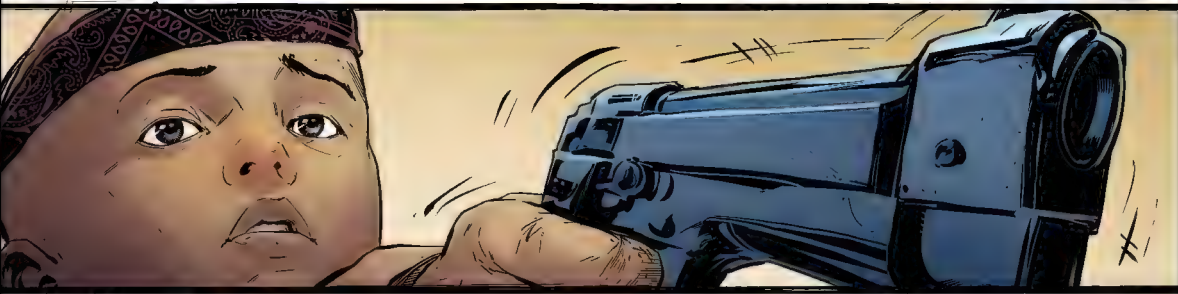


THAT WILL SLOW HIM DOWN.

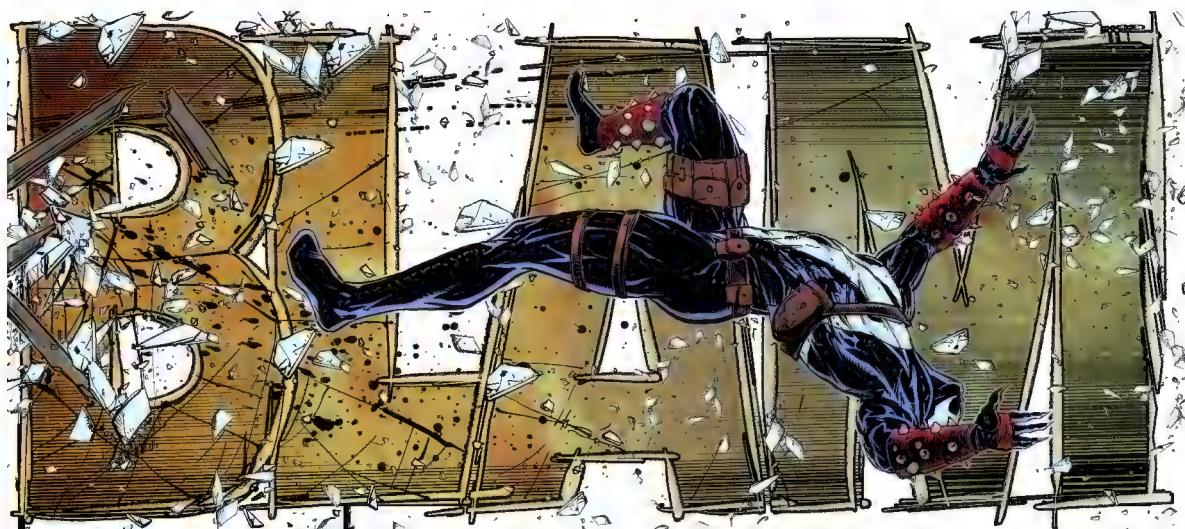


INSTEAD... AL CLEARS MOST OF THE ROOM IN THREE POINT SEVEN SECONDS.

BUT LAST ONE STANDING HE'S... JUST A CHILD. IT CAUSES AL TO HESITATE A FRACTION.







AL!

SHIT!



COME ON, MAN. I GOT YOU.

I'M OKAY.

THE HELL YOU ARE! BUT WE'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE-- FAST!



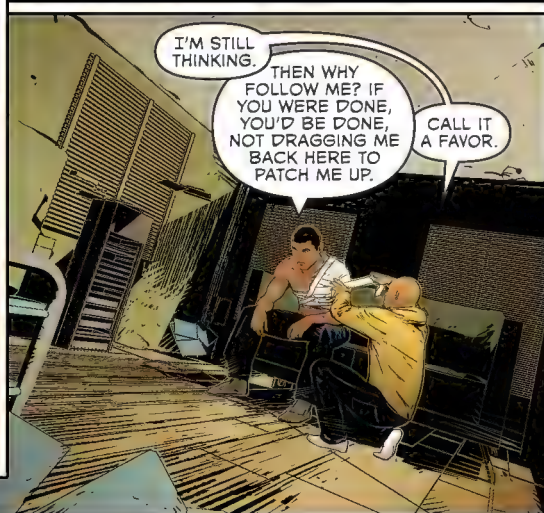
HE'S GOT DOZENS OF QUESTIONS BURSTING TO GET OUT, BUT EARL KNOWS THAT SURVIVAL TAKE PRECEDENCE AT MOMENTS LIKE THIS.

THEY'LL COME LOOKING FOR YOU.





YOU STILL  
HAVEN'T  
GIVEN ME AN  
ANSWER.



I'M STILL  
THINKING.

THEN WHY  
FOLLOW ME? IF  
YOU WERE DONE,  
YOU'D BE DONE,  
NOT DRAGGING ME  
BACK HERE TO  
PATCH ME UP.

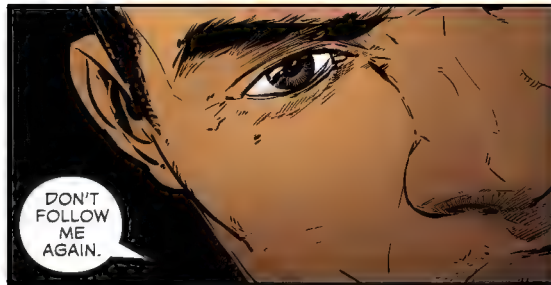
CALL IT  
A FAVOR.



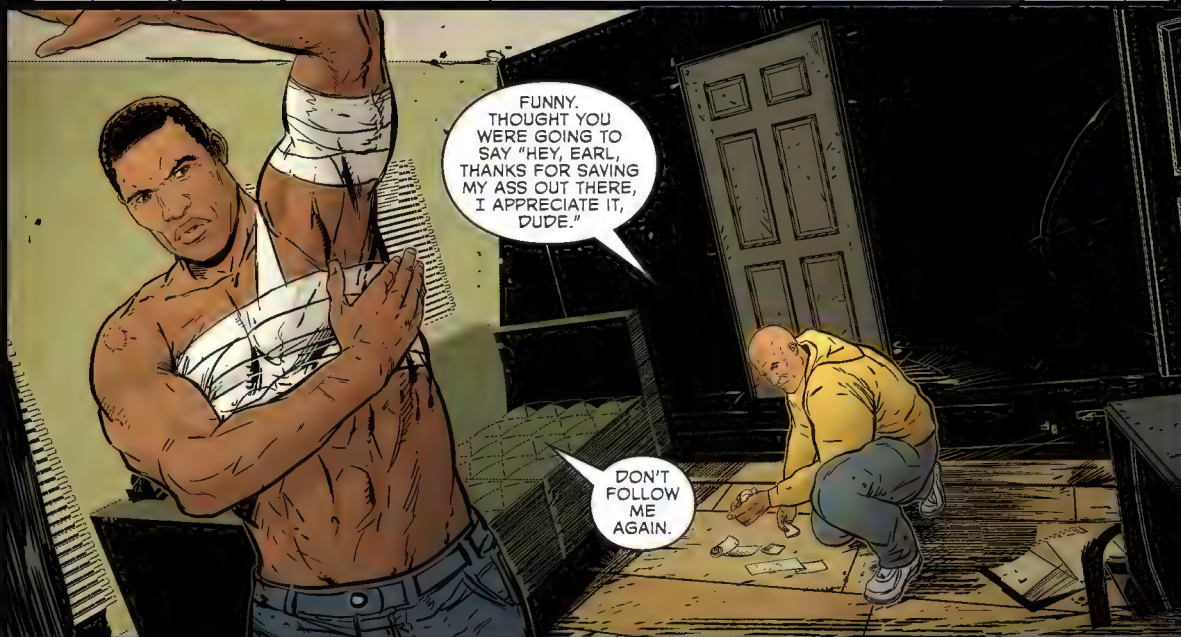
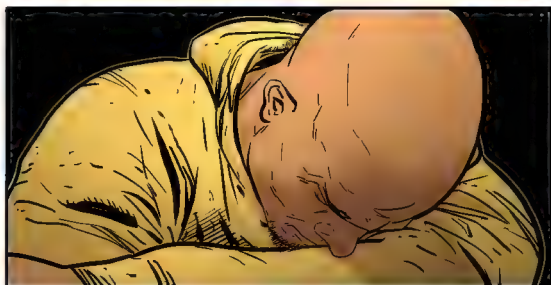
I GET THAT.  
YOU HAVE MY  
THANKS AGAIN. BUT  
IF YOU'RE NOT  
GOING TO COMMIT  
TO THIS THEN I  
NEED YOU TO DO  
ME A FAVOR.



YEAH?  
WHAT'S  
THAT?



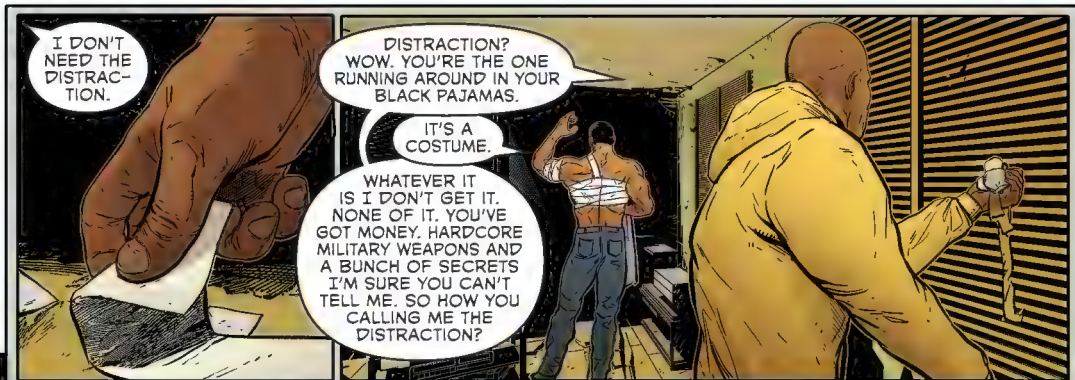
DON'T  
FOLLOW  
ME  
AGAIN.



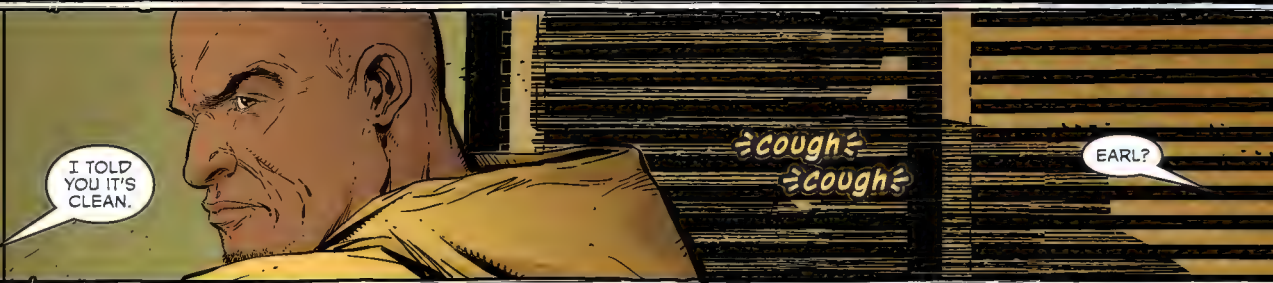
FUNNY.  
THOUGHT YOU  
WERE GOING TO  
SAY "HEY, EARL,  
THANKS FOR SAVING  
MY ASS OUT THERE,  
I APPRECIATE IT,  
DUDE."

DON'T  
FOLLOW  
ME  
AGAIN.





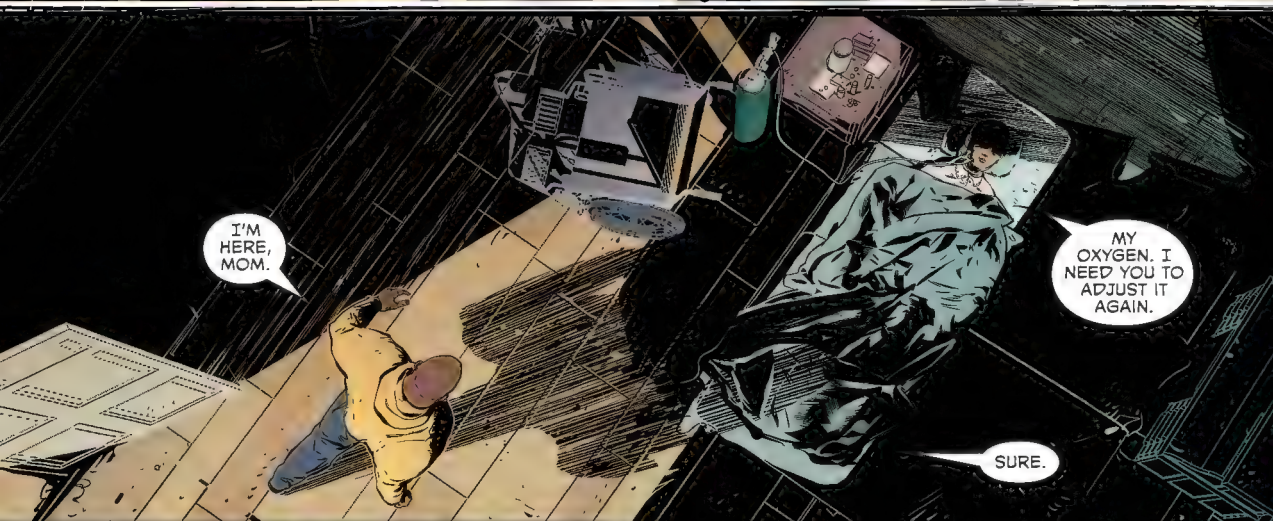




I TOLD  
YOU IT'S  
CLEAN.

≡cough≡  
≡cough≡

EARL?



I'M  
HERE,  
MOM.

MY  
OXYGEN. I  
NEED YOU TO  
ADJUST IT  
AGAIN.

SURE.



YOU'VE  
GOT THAT LOOK  
ON YOUR FACE,  
SON. WHAT'S  
WRONG?

JUST...  
TRYING TO  
FIGURE  
SOMETHING  
OUT.



IF YOU'RE  
LOOKING FOR  
AN EASY SOLUTION.  
THOSE DON'T EXIST.  
DOING RIGHT DON'T  
COME EASY. BUT  
YOU'RE MY BOY--  
AND YOU AND ME.  
WE WAS BUILT  
STRONG.



DON'T YOU  
LET LIFE GET  
THE BETTER  
OF YOU...



...YOU HEAR ME?  
YOUR DADDY NEVER LEARNED  
THAT AND IT KILLED HIM IN THE  
LONG RUN. SO, IF WHAT YOU'RE GOING  
THROUGH RIGHT NOW SEEM OVER-  
WHELMING--FEELS LIKE IT'S GOING TO  
CONSUME YOU--THEN IT MUST  
BE SOMETHING BIG. SOME-  
THING IMPORTANT.

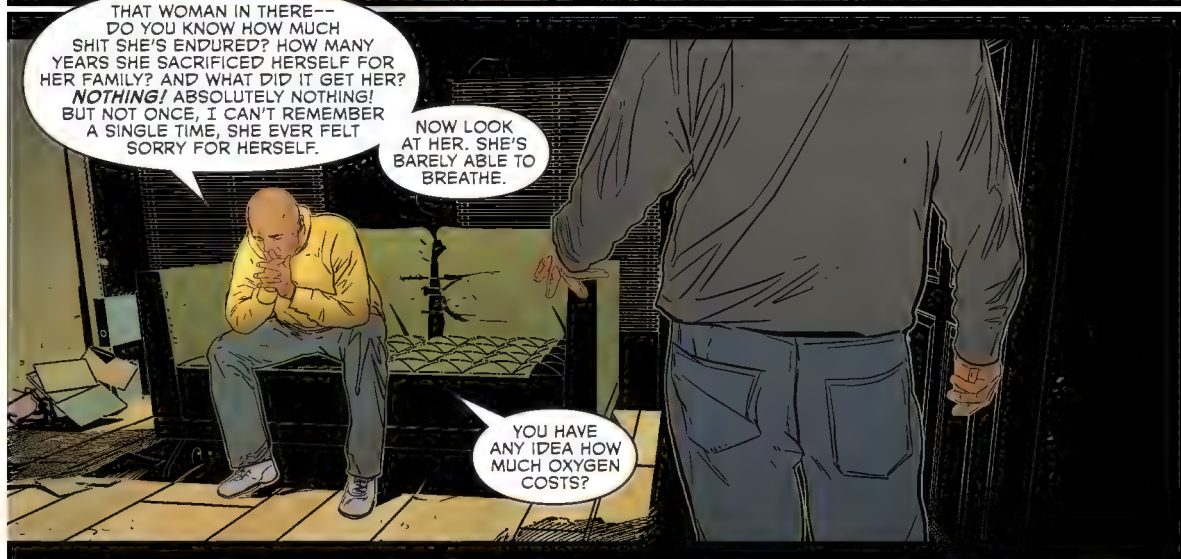
BUT I RAISED YOU  
TO ≡COUGH≡ ≡COUGH≡...  
I RAISED YOU TO KNOW THE  
DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RIGHT  
AND WRONG. SO STOP THINKING  
SO MUCH, YOU'RE HEART  
ALREADY HAS THE  
ANSWER FOR YOU.

NOW YOU  
GET. I COULD  
HEAR YOU'VE  
GOT COMPANY  
IN THE OTHER  
ROOM.





EVERY-  
THING OKAY  
WITH YOUR  
MOM?



THAT WOMAN IN THERE---  
DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH  
SHIT SHE'S ENDURED? HOW MANY  
YEARS SHE SACRIFICED HERSELF FOR  
HER FAMILY? AND WHAT DID IT GET HER?  
**NOTHING!** ABSOLUTELY NOTHING!  
BUT NOT ONCE, I CAN'T REMEMBER  
A SINGLE TIME, SHE EVER FELT  
SORRY FOR HERSELF.

NOW LOOK  
AT HER. SHE'S  
BARELY ABLE TO  
BREATHE.

YOU HAVE  
ANY IDEA HOW  
MUCH OXYGEN  
COSTS?



I  
DON'T.



MORE  
THAN I'VE  
GOT. WAY  
MORE.



ALL RIGHT.  
I'M IN. I'LL JOIN  
YOU-- FOR NOW. BUT  
I AIN'T WEARING NO  
SILLY COSTUME.

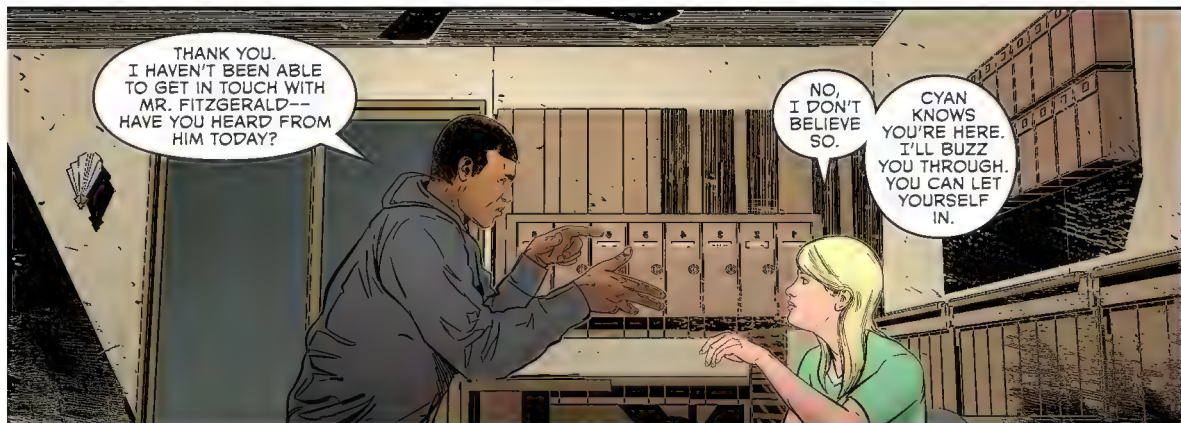
GOOD.  
'CAUSE I'VE  
ONLY GOT ONE. AND  
I PROMISE, YOU  
WON'T BE SORRY  
YOU MADE THIS  
DECISION.

WELCOME  
ABOARD  
PARTNER.





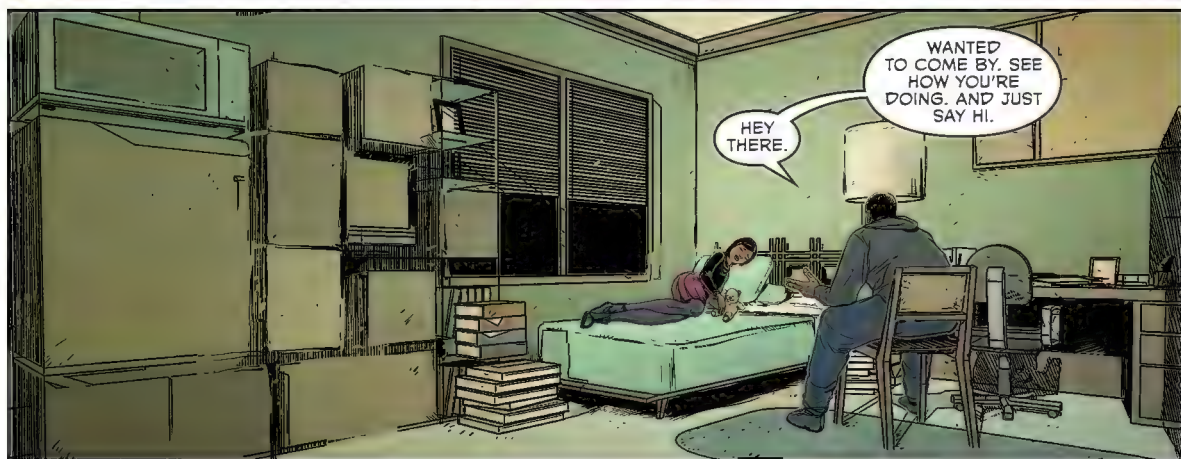
MR. FITZGERALD  
RECENTLY LISTED YOU AS  
FAMILY, MR. SMITH, SO YOU HAVE  
FULL VISITATION RIGHTS. WHICH  
ALLOWS YOU TO COME ANYTIME  
YOU WISH EXCEPT BETWEEN  
THE HOURS OF MIDNIGHT  
AND SEVEN A.M.



THANK YOU.  
I HAVEN'T BEEN ABLE  
TO GET IN TOUCH WITH  
MR. FITZGERALD--  
HAVE YOU HEARD FROM  
HIM TODAY?

NO,  
I DON'T  
BELIEVE  
SO.

CYAN  
KNOWS  
YOU'RE HERE.  
I'LL BUZZ  
YOU THROUGH.  
YOU CAN LET  
YOURSELF  
IN.

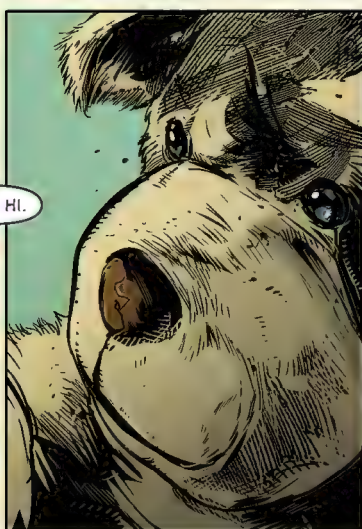


HEY  
THERE.

WANTED  
TO COME BY, SEE  
HOW YOU'RE  
DOING, AND JUST  
SAY HI.



SO... HI.





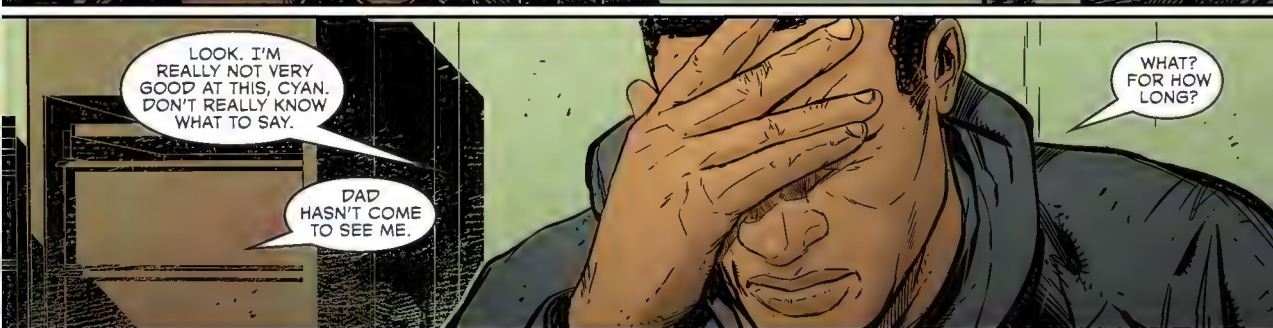


YOUR DAY--  
HOW WAS IT?  
DO ANYTHING  
INTERESTING?



THEY  
DON'T LET US  
DO INTERESTING  
THINGS HERE.

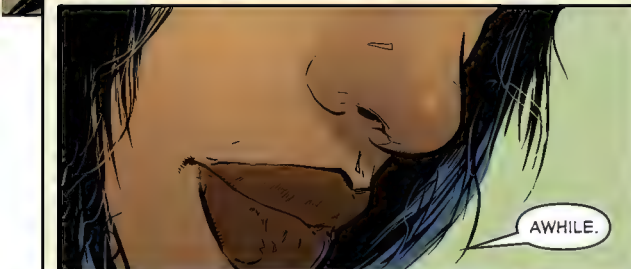
THAT'S TOO  
BAD. PROBABLY  
HAVE THEIR SILLY  
REASONS  
FOR THAT. SO...  
UM...



LOOK, I'M  
REALLY NOT VERY  
GOOD AT THIS, CYAN.  
DON'T REALLY KNOW  
WHAT TO SAY.

DAD  
HASN'T COME  
TO SEE ME.

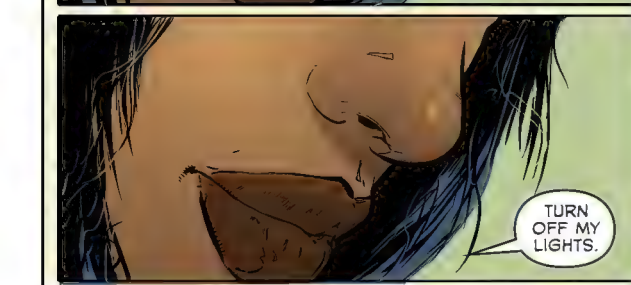
WHAT?  
FOR HOW  
LONG?



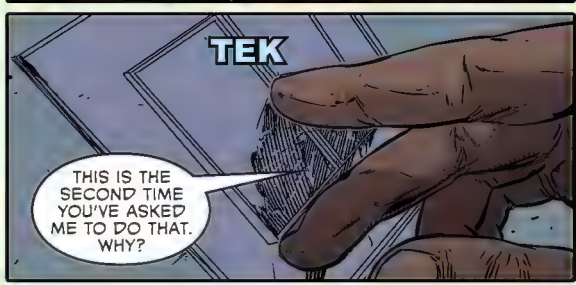
AWHILE.



YOU WANT  
ME TO DO  
SOMETHING?

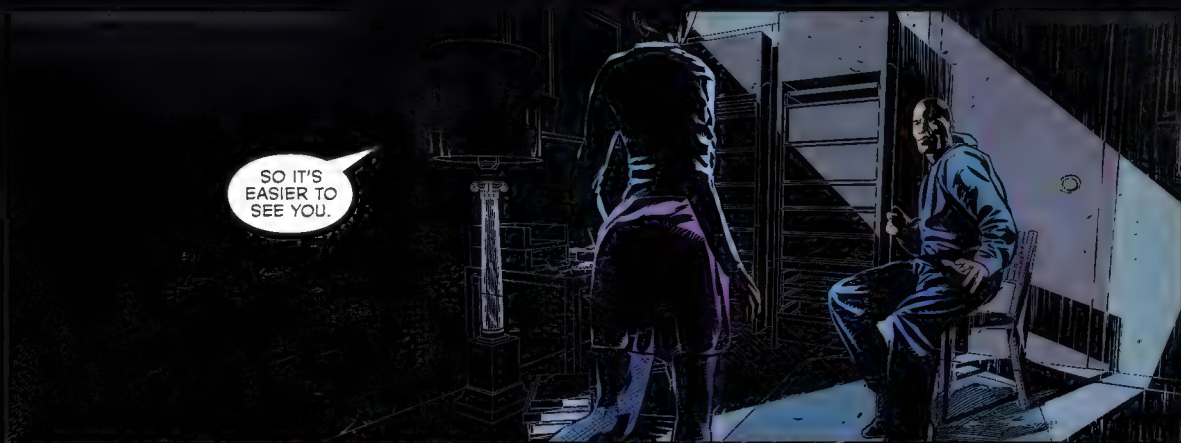


TURN  
OFF MY  
LIGHTS.



THIS IS THE  
SECOND TIME  
YOU'VE ASKED  
ME TO DO THAT.  
WHY?

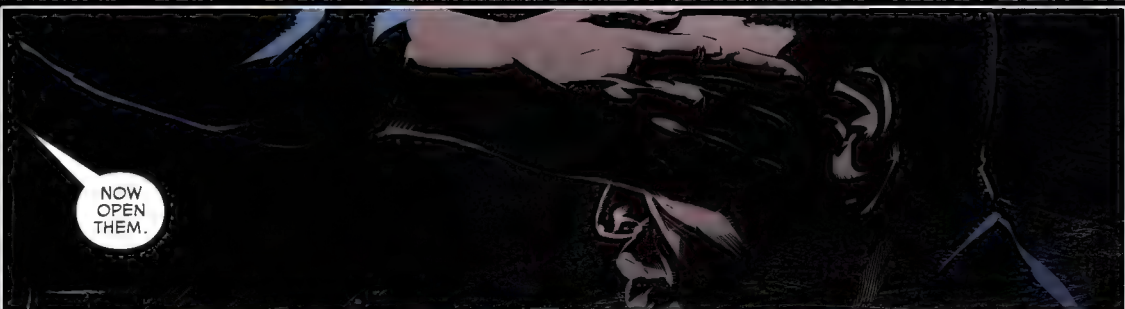
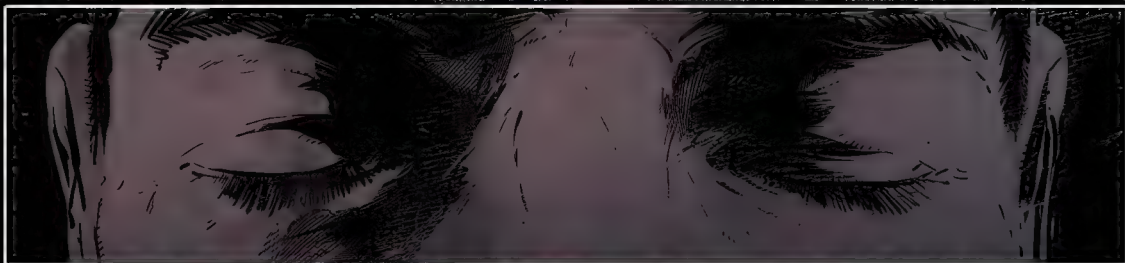




SO IT'S  
EASIER TO  
SEE YOU.



CLOSE  
YOUR  
EYES.



NOW  
OPEN  
THEM.

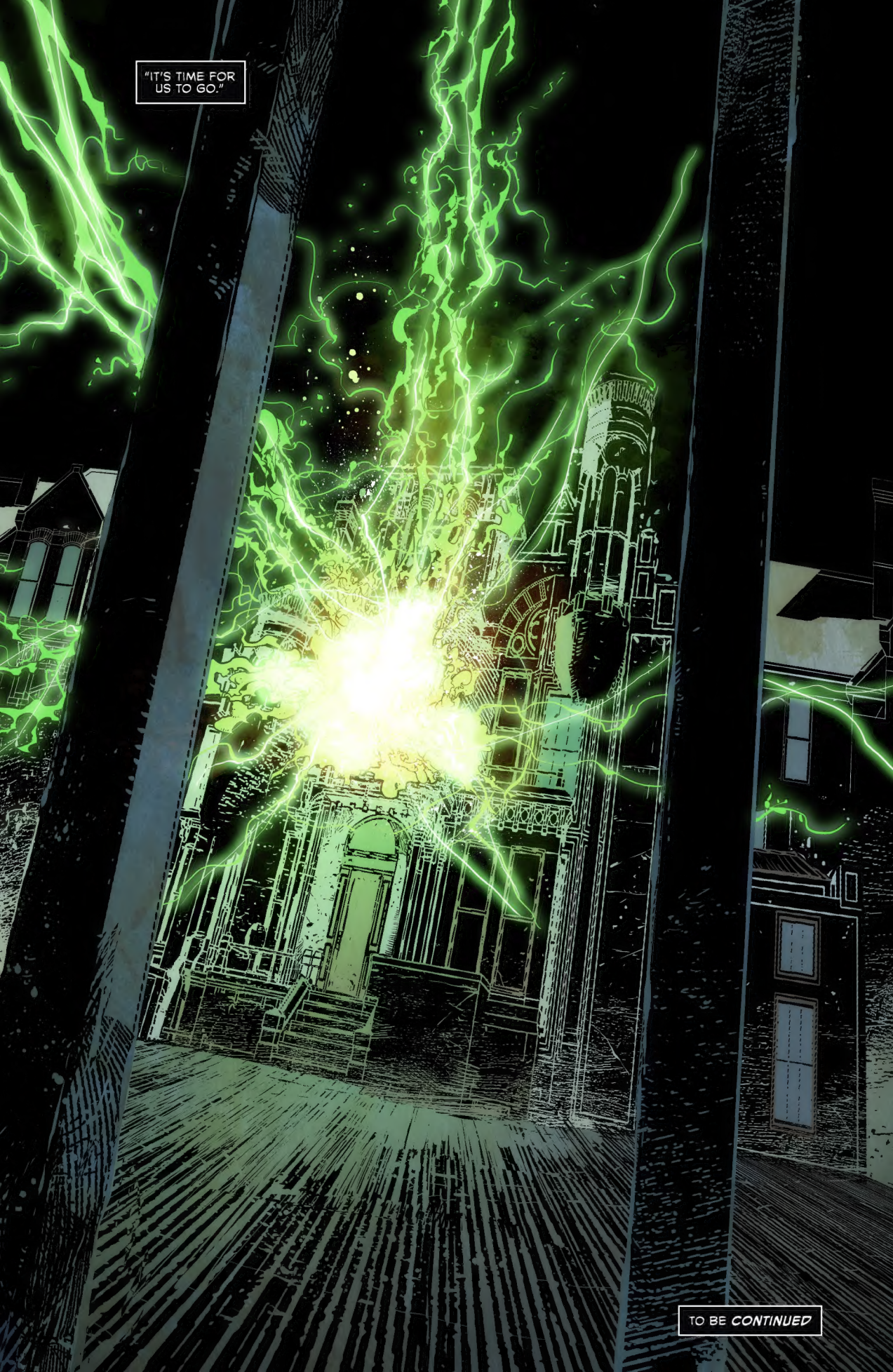


THERE  
YOU  
ARE.

I'VE BEEN  
WAITING  
FOR YOU.



"IT'S TIME FOR  
US TO GO."



TO BE *CONTINUED*



# SPAWNING GROUND

P.O. Box 12230  
Tempe, AZ 85284-0038

twitter.com/Todd\_McFarlane  
Facebook.com/liketoddmcFarlane

## MONTHLY CONTEST

WIN a 10 minute Skype call with Todd McFarlane and some COOL McFarlane toys and comics!

Each month readers will be giving a secret code word available ONLY in Spawning Ground.

Enter that code word HERE:

**[mcfarlane.com/spawningground](http://mcfarlane.com/spawningground)**  
for your chance to win awesome prizes!

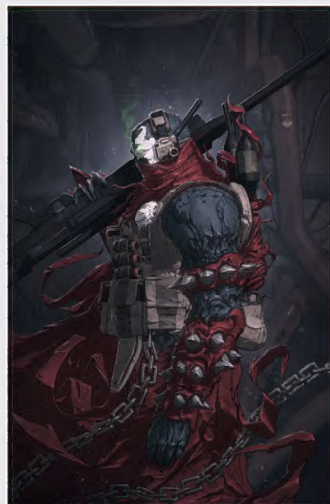
Spawn 269 Code Word: **Happyspawnyear**

Winners will be notified by email two weeks after the release of the comic.

Good Luck!

Thank you all for being loyal fans of Spawn!

Shannon Bailey  
Publishing Coordinator



### NEXT ISSUE

Spawn dives into the seedy underbelly of the drug world.



ERIK LARSEN

TODD McFARLANE

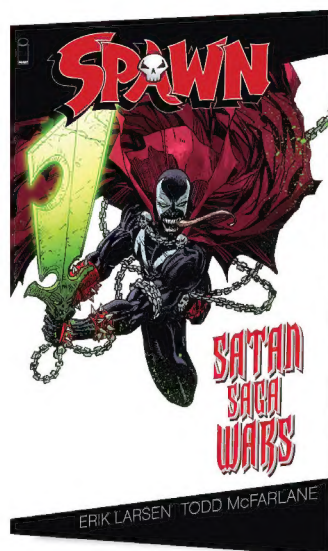


## SPAWN: SATAN SAGA WARS

Joining our hero on a quest into the bowels of hell, Spawn must clash with endless hordes of demons in hopes to save the souls of his beloved Wanda, and their unborn child.

Witness the final destiny of Spawn's cherished love unfold, as deals are struck and fates are assigned.

Featuring the kinetic art and imaginative story-telling of Image Comics founders Todd McFarlane (Spawn, Spider-Man, The Incredible Hulk) and Erik Larsen (Savage Dragon, Spider-Man), this is one collection you don't want to miss!



## IN STORES NOW

SPAWN  
SATAN SAGA  
WARS TPB



"A truly stunning debut. 5/5"  
**THE NERDIST**

"A campfire story on speed...a screaming funnel cloud of mythology and monsters...a widescreen Texas sky filled with Kirby Krackle. I can't wait to see where GOD COUNTRY touches down next."  
**CHRISTOPHER SEBELA**

"Donny Cates is a fresh new voice much worth hearing."  
**MARK WAID**

"GOD COUNTRY takes you on a ride from the heavy and desolate into a fantastical reality of living Gods, magical swords, and a mythology shrouded in mystery! I can't wait to read issue 2!"  
**BABS TARR**

"A rip-roaring yarn that entertains right up to it's stellar cliffhanger."  
**TERRY DODSON**

"Joyous, unbridled lunacy."  
**MICHAEL MORECI**

"So much fun to watch creators find that next level. Go, Cates, go!"  
**BRIAN MICHAEL BENDIS**

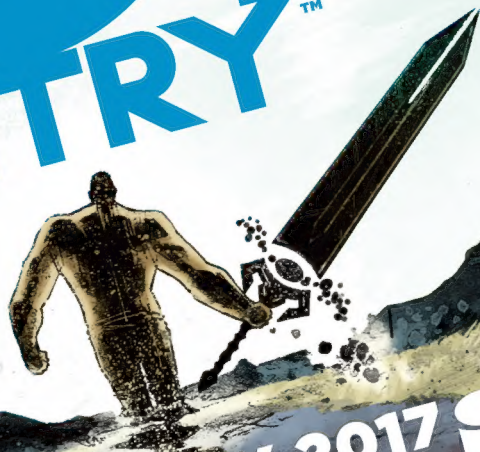
"GOD COUNTRY is the kind of comic book I wanted to make when I was as young and full of piss and sacrilege as Donny Cates is now. It manages to feel timeless, yet so of-the-moment, and it looks gorgeous doing it."  
**TIM SEELEY**

"GOD COUNTRY is the real deal, and God help you if you miss it."  
**PHIL HESTER**

**THE WORD IS OUT  
ABOUT**

# GOD COUNTRY™

**DONNY CATES  
GEOFF SHAW  
JASON WORDIE  
JOHN J. HILL**



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